

Amendments to the Claims:

In response to the Official Action / Advisory Action and in accordance with 37 CFR 1.121(c), please enter the following rewritten claims.

Please note that the amendments that follow are presented with the assumption that the amendments in applicant's last response (4/22/04) have not been entered.

Claims Showing Proposed Amendments

Claims 1-16 (Canceled).

17. *(Currently amended)* A remote unitary module for controlling access to a plurality of video channels that are distributed over a communications conduit,
- wherein the communications conduit has a head-end and at least one remote-end,
- said remote unitary module being positioned along a remote-end of the communications conduit,
- said remote unitary module being provided with a changeable list of permitted video channel numbers, said changeable list containing at least one permitted video channel number therein, and,
- wherein is provided a standard video signal transmitted over said communications conduit, said standard video signal containing an overscan region and at least one overscan scan line therein, wherein at least a portion of said changeable list of permitted video channels has been embedded in one or more of said at least one overscan scan lines therein,

said remote unitary module, comprising:

- (a) a first tuner in electronic communication with said communications conduit, said first tuner receiving a particular video channel as input and providing a baseband video signal as output, said particular video channel being associated with a particular video channel number;
- (b) means for changing said first tuner to receive a different video channel, said different video channel having a different video channel number;
- (c) a CPU in electronic communications with said first tuner, said CPU programmed to at least perform the steps of,
 - (c1) extracting from said at least one transmitted overscan scan line at least a portion of said embedded portion of said changeable list of permitted video channels,
 - (c2) sensing said different video channel number and determining whether said different video channel number is in said extracted changeable list of permitted video channel numbers, and,
 - (c3) prohibiting display of said different video channel if said different video channel is not in said extracted changeable list of permitted video channel numbers;
- (d) computer RAM in electronic communication with said CPU, said RAM containing
 - at least one digital image stored therein; and,
- (e) a video switch having at least a first video input, a second video input, and a video output,

wherein

- (e1) said first video input receives said baseband video signal from said first tuner,
- (e2) said second video input receives a baseband video representation of said digital image stored in said computer RAM, and,
- (e3) said video output is switchable under control of said CPU between said baseband video signal from said first tuner and said baseband video representation of said digital image.

Claims 18-21 (Canceled).

22. *(Currently Amended)* A method of controlling access to a plurality of video channels that are distributed over a communications conduit, each of said video channels being associated with a video channel number, wherein is provided the remote unitary module of Claim 17, and,

wherein the communications conduit has a head-end and at least one remote-end,
wherein there is provided a plurality of said remote unitary modules positioned along a remote-end of said communications conduit, and,

wherein each of said plurality of remote unitary modules has a changeable
list of permitted video channel numbers associated therewith,

comprising the steps of:

- (a) assigning an individual security key code to each of said plurality of remote unitary modules;
- (b) identifying at least one of said plurality of remote unitary module that is to receive a changed list of permitted video channel numbers and identifying an individual security key code assigned to each of said identified remote unitary modules;
- (c) obtaining a standard video image from a digital or an analog source, said video image having a plurality of overscan scan lines contained therein;
- (d) obtaining a predetermined overscan scan line of said video image;
- (e) for each identified remote unitary module, impressing a value representative of its assigned identified individual security key code into said predetermined overscan scan line, thereby creating a modified video image;
- (f) impressing values representative of said changed list of permitted video channel numbers into a second predetermined overscan scan line, thereby creating a further modified video image;
- (g) broadcasting said further modified video image over said communications conduit;
- (h) receiving said broadcast video image within at least one of said at least one remote unitary modules;
- (i) within at least one of said at least one remote unitary modules wherein said broadcast video image is received,
 - (i1) determining a local security key code for said remote unitary module wherein said broadcast video image is received,
 - (i2) identifying said predetermined overscan scan line,

- (i3) extracting from said predetermined overscan scan line any values representative of said assigned individual security keys impressed therein,
- (i4) determining from any values extracted from said predetermined overscan scan line at least one transmitted individual security key,
- (i5) comparing each of said at least one transmitted security keys with said local individual security key,
- (i6) if said local individual security key is equal to any one of said at least one transmitted keys, storing within said selected remote unitary module a numerical representation of said changed list of permitted video channel numbers, and,
- (i7) performing steps (i1) through (i6) for at least one selected remote unitary module;
- (j) monitoring said first tuner to detect whether the user has selected a different video channel number;
- (k) determining whether said selected different video channel number is among said changed list of permitted video channel numbers;
- (l) if said different video channel number is not among said changed list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user an alternative video image for said different video channel; and,
- (m) if said different channel number is among said changed list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user said different video channel.

- (~~1n~~) if said different video channel number is not among said changed list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user an alternative video image for said different video channel; and,
- (~~mo~~) if said different channel number is among said changed list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user said different video channel.

Claims 23-27 (Canceled)

- 28. *(Currently Amended)* A method of controlling access to a plurality of video channels that are distributed over a communications conduit according to Claim 22, wherein said predetermined overscan scan line is a first scan line of said video image.
- 29. *(Currently Amended)* A method of controlling access to a plurality of video channels that are distributed over a communications conduit according to Claim 22, wherein said predetermined overscan scan line is a last non-visible scan line of said video image.
- 30. *(Currently Amended)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels that are distributed over a communications conduit,
 - wherein said remote unitary module is provided with a changeable list of permitted video channel numbers, each of said permitted channel numbers being associated with one of said plurality of video channels,
 - wherein is provided a standard video signal transmitted over said communications conduit, said video signal containing an overscan portion with at least one

overscan scan line therein, wherein at least a portion of a revised list of permitted video channels is embedded in one or more of said overscan scan lines, wherein said video signal contains at least one overscan scan line wherein a security key is embedded, and, wherein said remote unitary module has a module security key associated therewith,

said remote unitary module, comprising:

- (a) a first video tuner in electronic communication with said communications conduit, said first tuner being configurable to accept at least two of said plurality of video channels as input, wherein,
 - (a1) said first video tuner is switchable to receive a selected one of said at least two video channels, said selected video channel having a corresponding selected video channel number,
 - (a2) said first video tuner transmits a first tuner video signal as output, said first tuner video signal being representative of said selected video channel;
- (b) a CPU in electronic communication with said first video tuner, said CPU being programmed to perform at least the steps of:
 - (b1) examining said video signal overscan portion to determine said transmitted security key,
 - (b2) examining said video signal overscan portion to determine said revised list of permitted video channels,
 - (b3) comparing said transmitted security key with said module security key,

- (b4) if said transmitted security does not match said module security key,
 responding according to said selected video channel to determine whether
 said selected video channel number is in said provided changeable list of
 permitted video channel numbers, and,
- (b5) if said transmitted security does match said module security key,
 - (1) responding according to said selected video channel to determine
 whether said selected video channel number is in said revised list
 of permitted video channel numbers, and,
 - (2) storing said revised list of permitted video channel numbers in
 place of said provided permitted video channel numbers;
- (c) computer RAM in electronic communication with said CPU, said RAM
 containing at least one digital image stored therein;
- (d) a video controller in electronic communication with said CPU and said RAM, said
 video controller having a video controller output for transmitting a controller
 video signal representative of at least one of said at least one digital images stored
 in said RAM;
- (e) a video switch having at least a first video switch input, a second switch video
 input, and a video switch output,
 wherein
 - (e1) said first video switch input receives said first tuner video signal from said
 first video tuner,
 - (e2) said second video switch input receives said controller video signal from
 said video controller output,

(e3) said video switch output is switchable under control of said CPU between said first tuner video signal and said controller video signal, depending on whether said selected video channel is a permitted video channel.

31. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, wherein said first video tuner is switchable by the user to receive a selected one of said at least two video channels.
32. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, wherein said computer RAM contains a plurality of digital images stored therein, and wherein said video controller successively displays selected ones of said plurality of digital images under control of said CPU.
33. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, wherein said first tuner video signal is a baseband signal and said controller video signal is a baseband signal.
34. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, wherein said controller video signal is generated at a same frequency as said output from said first video tuner.

35. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, further comprising:
- (f) a video display device positionable to be in electronic communication with said video switch output, said video display device for displaying in visually perceptible form a video signal from said output of said video switch.
36. *(Previously presented)* A remote unitary module for controlling access by a user to a plurality of video channels according to Claim 30, further comprising:
- (f) a video modulator in electronic communication with said video switch output, said video modulator modulating a video signal from said output of said video switch to a predetermined video channel.
37. *(Currently amended)* A method of controlling access to a plurality of video channels that are broadcast over a communications conduit, each of said video channels being associated with a video channel number, and wherein is provided at least one remote unitary module as in Claim 30 which is in electronic communication with said communications conduit and with said plurality of video channels, each of said at least one remote unitary modules having a security code associated therewith, comprising the steps of:
- (a) identifying at least one of said at least one remote unitary module that is to receive a revised list of permitted video channel numbers;
 - (b) identifying a particular security key code assigned to each of said identified remote unitary modules;

- (c) obtaining a video image from a digital or an analog source, said video image having a plurality of scan lines contained therein;
- (d) selecting a first overscan scan line of said overscan portion of said video image;
- (e) storing a value representative of each of said identified particular security key codes into said first overscan scan line, thereby creating a modified video image;
- (f) selecting a second overscan scan line of said video image;
- (f) storing values representative of said revised list of permitted video channel numbers into said second ~~predetermined~~ overscan scan line, thereby creating a further modified video image;
- (h) broadcasting said further modified video image as a standard video signal over said communications conduit;
- (i) receiving said broadcast video image within a particular remote unitary module, said particular remote unitary module having a particular security key associated therewith;
- (j) within said particular remote unitary module,
 - (j1) extracting from said first overscan scan line at least one of said values representative of said assigned individual security keys stored therein,
 - (j2) determining from any of said extracted values representative of said assigned individual security keys at least one of said identified security keys,
 - (j3) comparing any of said determined identified security keys with said particular security key of said particular remote unitary module,

- (j4) if said particular security key matches any of said determined identified security keys, storing within said particular remote unitary module a numerical representation of said revised list of permitted video channel numbers in said second overscan scan line,
- (j5) monitoring said first tuner within said particular remote unitary module to detect when the user has selected a video channel number,
- (j6) determining whether said selected video channel number is among said revised list of permitted video channel numbers,
- (j7) if said selected video channel number is among said revised list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user said selected video channel, and,
- (j8) if said selected video channel number is not among said revised list of permitted video channel numbers, displaying to the user an alternative video image.

38. *(Currently Amended)* A method according to Claim 37, wherein said first overscan scan line and said second overscan scan line are a same scan line.

39. *(Currently Amended)* A method according to Claim 37, wherein at least one of said first overscan scan line and said second overscan scan line ~~are non-visible scan lines~~ is proximate to a lower edge of said video image.